Bilateral Trade between India and Croatia

811. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Croatia have decided to further strengthen their bilateral trade and economic cooperation; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) The Indo-Croatian Joint Committee on Trade & Economic Cooperation has been established with a view to strengthen cooperation between the two countries. Four meetings of the Joint Committee has taken place since 1994. The last (4th) Session of the Committee was concluded in New Delhi on November 17, 1998 in which many areas of cooperation were discused like Tourism, Telecommunication, Automobile Sector, Enginncring, Electronic and Software, Chemicals Petro-Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals, ship-building, Agriculture.

(ii) Both the countries have extended 'Most Favoured Nation' Treatment to each other in respect of import and export licences, customs duties and all other charges and taxes as applicable.

(iii) The business communities of both the countries are being encouraged to improve direct business level contacts through trade fairs and exhibitions, exchange of delegation and to promote joint ventures and other forms of economic cooperation.

Export and Import Policy Regarding Agricultural Proudcts

812. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy regarding export and import of agricultural produce;

(b) the quantum and value of imports and exports of agricultural produce; and

(c) the efforts being made to make exports of agricultural produce more possible?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The policy of the Government to permit exports of agricultural products and farm goods is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm Incomes and earning foreign exchange. Review of export peiformance of agricultural products is an on-going process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable. The import policy of the Government is primarily based on augmentation of domestic supplies to meet the local requirements and providing inputs at reasonable price to the processors/manufacturers of food items. The details of the Export import Policy of ugricultural items is available in ITC (HS) Classification of Exports and import items published by Ministry of Commerce, copies of which are supplied to Parliament Library.

(b) During the year 1997-98 the Export-Import figures of agricultural products are

EXPROTS: RS. 17125.95 CRORES

IMPORTS: RS. 6379.01 CRORES

ISourct: DGCI&S, Calcutta]

(c) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of agricultural products and farm goods include.

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through dcrmonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of rrwjikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.

2. Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/processing centrres, auction platforms; ripening, curing, chambers and quality testing equipment.

3. Providing financial assistance to exporters/growers/Cooperative Societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre-cooling/cold shorage facilities, intergrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).

4. Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging strengthening of quality control.

5. Estasblishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for improving the acceptability of the product especially the mangoes in overseas markets.

6. Grant of Air Freight Subsidy for exports of selected fresh vegetables and fruits.

7. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyers-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.

8. Setting up of intcgreated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various international Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

9. Setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality tochnology transfer process upgradaiion and product development.

10. Providing assistance in development of data base and dissemination of market information.

प्याज का आयत

813. **श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक** :
प्रो0 रामगोपाल यादव :

क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या दुबई से समुद्र के रास्ते आयातित प्याज की कोई खेप पहुंची है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो किसान टन प्याज आया और उक्त प्याज किस कम्पनी की मार्फत मंगाया गया था;

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि उक्त प्याज मुम्बई गोदी पर सड़ गया है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं और इस कार्य के लिए सरकार द्वारा किन-किन लोगों को जिम्मेदार ठहराया गया है और उनके खिलाफ क्या कार्यवाई की गई है; और

(ड) सरकार द्वारा आयातित प्याज के लिए धन के भुगतान हेतु अपनाए जाने वाले तरीके का ब्यौरा क्या है?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री रामकृष्ण हेगड़े) : (क) जी, हां

(ख) दुबई से विभिन्न आयातकों द्वारा समुद्री मार्ग से 5900.37 मी0 टन प्याज का आयात किया गया है जिसमें रजति एजेंसीज और मैसर्स शिव राम इन्टरप्राइजेज शामिल है।

(ग) मुबंई बन्दरगाह स्थित बन्दरगाह स्वास्थ्य प्राधिकारियों द्वारा लगभग 69 मी0टन प्याज को मानव उपभोग के लिए अनुपयुक्त पाया गया था।

(घ) प्याज सड़ जाने के सही-सही कारण का पता नही चल पाया है और यह भी सिद्ध नही हो पाया है कि क्या यह प्याज आयात के समय ही खराब हालत में था अथवा बाद में खराब हुआ था। तथापि, सीमाशुल्क विभाग द्वारा कागजी कारवाई को पूरा करने में कोई देरी नही हुई थी और इसलिए सीमाशुल्क विभाग के किसी अधिकारी को इस कार्गो को हुए किसी नुकसान के लिए जिम्मेवार नही ठहराया गया था।

(ड) ऐसे आयातों के लिए सामान्य भुगतान-विधि अर्थात मुक्त रूप से परिवर्तनीय मुद्रा भुगतान, अपनाई जाएगी।

Signing of Trade Treaties

814. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the countries with whom Government have signed trade treaties uptill now alongwith the areas j thereof;